

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS:PBOR, PN

SUBJECT:PRESS ITEMS OF JULY 1, AND JUNE 30.

1. THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT THE DAILY NEWS
BRIEFING ON THURSDAY, JUNE 30:

Q. SENATOR SCHWEIKER SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE US SHOULD CARRY
TO PANAMA THE ISSUE OF A CAR ACCIDENT HERE. I THINK A
PHYSICIAN WAS INVOLVED WITH A PANAMANIAN DIPLOMAT. DO YOU
HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT? A. WE DON'T HAVE ANY PARTICULAR
COMMENT ON SENATOR SCHWEIKER'S PRESS RELEASE, WHICH,
FRANKLY, WE HAVE NOT SEEN IN FULL. WE DO REGRET THE TRAGIC
INJURY WHICH WAS SUFFERED BY DR. HALLA BROWN, AND WE HAVE
STRESSED THAT A NUMBER OF TIMES SINCE THE ACCIDENT IN APRIL
OF 1974. WE HAVE BEEN AND ARE CONTINUING TO DISCUSS IN-
DEMNIFICATION WITH PANAMANIAN AUTHORITIES.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON ... Q. WHERE? A. WELL, I'M NOT
PREPARED TO GO BEYOND THE FACT THAT DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN
HELD.
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Q. DO YOU HAVE A LINE ON WHAT HAPPENED TO DR. BROWN? A. NO
I DON'T HAVE THE FULL STORY HERE. I NOTICE THERE WAS A
RATHER COMPLETE ONE ALL OVER THE FRONT PAGE OF AN AFTERNOON
NEWSPAPER THE OTHER DAY.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE MORE GENERAL QUESTION OF IMMUNITY? I
MEAN THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL REPORTS OF ACCIDENTS NOT
BEING PAID, INSURANCE, AND SO ON, INVOLVING DIPLOMATS.
A. DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY. AGAIN, I DON'T HAVE ANY PARTICU-
LAR COMMENT ON THIS SUBJECT.

Q. WOULD THE STATE DEPARTMENT SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD REMOVE DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY FOR DIPLOMATS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN ACCIDENTS IN NONDIPLOMATIC CIRCUMSTANCES?

A. I DON'T HAVE THAT IN FRONT OF ME, BUT I'LL TAKE THE QUESTION AND GET YOU AN ANSWER.

Q. HODDING, COULD YOU TELL ME HAS THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS ACCIDENT BEEN -- IS HE STILL IN THE UNITED STATES? Q. ACCORDING TO THE STAR ARTICLE, NO. A. ACCORDING TO THAT STORY WHICH I READ.

Q. I WOULD JUST LIKE TO RAISE ANOTHER AREA IF I COULD.

A. OKAY, LET ME SEE IF ANYBODY ELSE FOLLOWS THAT QUESTION.

Q. I HAVE ONE. THE PRESIDENT SAID THIS MORNING THAT THE MAJOR QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN SETTLED, AND I WONDER IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SAY WHICH ONES HE WAS TALKING ABOUT. A. NO, I DON'T WANT TO CHARACTERIZE WHAT AREAS ARE AT WHAT STATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. I WOULD SIMPLY WANT TO ADD THAT THIS, AS THE SECRETARY HAS NOTED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, IS A COMPLETE TREATY AND UNCLASSIFIED

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PACKAGE THAT WE'RE NEGOTIATING. WHILE WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS WE JUST HESITATE TO COMMENT ON ANY ONE OF THE COMPONENTS OF IT UNTIL THE ENTIRE TREATY IS UP FOR APPROVAL.

2. NO FURTHER QUESTIONS WERE RAISED IN THE JUNE 30 NOON BRIEFING.

3. THE FOLLOWING IS AN ARTICLE BY DON OBERDORFER IN THE JULY 1 WASHINGTON POST.

BEGIN QUOTE. PRESIDENT CARTER DISCLOSED YESTERDAY THAT MOST OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES IN THE PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT A NEW TREATY ON THE WATERWAY CAN BE SIGNED WITH PANAMA THIS SUMMER.

SPEAKING AT A NEWS CONFERENCE, CARTER IDENTIFIED THE FINANCIAL ISSUE OF PAYMENTS TO PANAMA AS A SERIOUS DISAGREEMENT REMAINING. AND HE NOTED THAT EVEN WHEN FULL AGREEMENT IS REACHED AND A TREATY SIGNED, A MAJOR EFFORT WILL BE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL.

ACCORDING TO INFORMED SOURCES, THE TENTATIVE ACCORD CALLS FOR PANAMA TO TAKE LEGAL JURISDICTION OF THE CANAL ZONE WITHIN THREE YEARS AND TO ASSUME A GRADUALLY LARGER ROLE IN OPERATION AND DEFENSE OF THE CANAL UNTIL IT IS TURNED OVER COMPLETELY BY THE UNITED STATES BY DECEMBER 31, 1999.

A SEPARATE BUT CLOSELY RELATED US-PANAMANIAN TREATY, WHICH OTHER NATIONS MAY ALSO SIGN, IS REPORTED TO PLEDGE OPEN AND NONDISCRIMINATORY ACCESS TO THE CANAL EVEN AFTER PANAMA TAKES CONTROL. THIS DOCUMENT IS SAID TO IMPLY -- BUT NOT TO STATE EXPLICITLY -- A US RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN CASE OPEN ACCESS SHOULD BE DENIED.

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IN A LETTER SENT TO CARTER YESTERDAY AND MADE PUBLIC BY SENATOR JESSE HELMS (R-NC) RETIRED ADMS. GEORGE ANDERSON, ARLEIGH A. BURKE, ROBERT B. CARNEY AND THOMAS H. MOORER-- ALL FORMER CHIEFS OF NAVAL OPERATIONS -- URGED THAT THE UNITED STATES "RETAIN FULL SOVEREIGN CONTROL" OVER THE CANAL AND CANAL ZONE FOR SECURITY REASONS.

DENOTING MILITARY COMMAND SUPPORT FOR THE PLANNED TREATY, GENERAL GEORGE BROWN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF AND ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL BERNARD W. ROGERS, HAVE PARTICIPATED WITH U.S. TREATY NEGOTIATORS ELLSWORTH BUNKER AND SOL LINOWITZ IN BRIEFINGS FOR MORE THAN HALF OF THE SENATE AND KEY MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. RATIFICATION OF A TREATY REQUIRES A TWO-THIRDS VOTE OF THE SENATE, AND IN THIS CASE IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION FROM THE HOUSE AND SENATE WOULD ALSO BE NEEDED.

PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATORS ARE SAID TO HAVE MENTIONED FIGURES AS HIGH AS \$1 BILLION IN PAYMENTS FOR CONTINUED US CONTROL OVER THE CANAL DURING THE NEXT TWO DECADES AND SOME REPORTS SAY SERIOUS DEMANDS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS. THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO OFFER MUCH LESS AND IS INSISTING, AS CARTER SUGGESTED YESTERDAY, THAT THE PAYMENTS TO PANAMA BE MADE FROM PORTIONS OF THE TOLLS COLLECTED FROM THE SHIPS PASSING THROUGH THE WATERWAY.

STRONG OPPOSITION FROM SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND HEAVY MAIL TO CONGRESS AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGAINST A GIVE-AWAY OF THE CANAL SUGGESTS THAT CARTER FACES A TOUGH POLITICAL BATTLE FOR APPROVAL. NEGOTIATOR LINOWITZ TOLD A STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING TUESDAY, "THE GRIM FACT IS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE NOT YET READY TO SUPPORT A NEW

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TREATY. THEY ARE GROSSLY UNINFORMED ABOUT IT.#

CARTER HAS PLEDGED TO PRESENT THE CASE FOR A TREATY IN A BROADCAST "FIRESIDE CHAT" AT THE RIGHT MOMENT. HE IS BEING INFORMED DAILY ON THE NEGOTIATIONS AND SAY YESTERDAY HE IS

DEVOTING A LOT OF TIME TO THEM. CARTER SAID IT IS HIS JUDGMENT THAT BRIG. GENERAL OMAR TORRIJOS, PANAMA'S GOVERNMENTAL LEADER, ALSO WOULD LIKE TO CONCLUDE A NEW TREATY THIS SUMMER. END QUOTE.

4. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED IN FRIDAY, JULY 1, WASHINGTON POST.

BEGIN QUOTE. WILL ALL THE BLUSTER OF TEDDY ROOSEVELT, SEN. RICHARD SCHWEIKER (R-PA.0) ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY HE WOULD TEACH THE PANAMANIAN A THING OR TWO ABOUT INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MORALITY.

SCHWEIKER SAID HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO PREVENT PANAMA FROM GETTING \$1.4 MILLION IN MILITARY ASSISTANCE NEXT YEAR UNTIL IT COMPENSATES DR. HALLA BROWN, A WASHINGTON PHYSICIAN PARALYZED THREE YEARS AGO IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT INVOLVING THE PANAMANIAN CULTURAL ATTACHE.

BUT WAIT. SCHWEIKER NEVER CONSULTED BROWN BEFORE CHARGING TO HER RESCUE. GIVING SCHWEIKER A POLITE "THANKS BUT NO THANKS" SHE SAID YESTERDAY "I WOULDN'T LIKE A STUPID ACCIDENT PUT IN THE SAME CLASS AS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS"

SCHWEIKER WAS NOT DETERRED, HOWEVER, AND HIS OFFICE ANNOUNCED AFTER THE SENATOR PHONED BROWN THAT "HE FEELS VERY STRONGLY ABOUT THIS AND WILL STICK BY HIS PLANS IRREGARDLESS."

AN AIDE TO SCHWEIKER SAID THE SENATOR WOULD ACCOMPLISH UNCLASSIFIED

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HIS PURPOSE BY ATTEMPTING TO "STRIKE \$1.4 MILLION IN AID TO PANAMA, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND FOREIGN MILITARY CREDIT SALES, FROM THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND RELATED APPROPRIATIONS BILL" WHEN IT COMES UP BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE THIS MONTH.

BROWN HAS HAD THREE YEARS TO BECOME RECONCILED, IF ONE CAN EVER BECOME RECONCILED, TO TOTAL PARALYSIS WHICH ROBBED HER OF ALL MOVEMENT BELOW THE NECK.

SHE IS STILL A STRIKINGLY HANDSOME WOMAN, WITH SUCH BRIGHT, INTENSE EYES AND SHORT WHITE, THICK HAIR THAT ONE ALMOST FORGETS THE THIN WITHERED ARMS AND QUADRIPLEGIC'S PARAPHERNALIA THAT SURROUND HER.

EVER SINCE AN ARTICLE LAST YEAR IN THE WASHINGTON POST'S POTOMAC MAGAZINE AND ANOTHER ARTICLE THIS WEEK IN THE WASHINGTON STAR, BROWN HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF THE PROBLEMS

ASSOCIATED WITH DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY.

THE PANAMANIAN EMBASSY SAID YESTERDAY THAT IT IS AS UPSET AS BROWN THAT SHE HAS BECOME A CAUSE CELEBRE.

"WE REGRET THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE SENSATIONALIZING THE INCIDENT AND PORTRAYING THE EMBASSY OF PANAMA AS BEING CALLOUS AND INDIFFERENT", SAID POLITICAL ATTACHE GEORGE FISHER.

"THE FACTS ARE TO THE CONTRARY. THE AMBASSADOR OF PANAMA AT THAT TIME (NICOLAS GONZALEZ REVILLA) DID EVERYTHING HUMANLY POSSIBLE TO EXPRESS AND EXPLAIN THE SYMPATHY UNCLASSIFIED

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AND SORROW THAT EVERYONE AT THE EMBASSY FELT FOR DR. BROWN. THE AMBASSADOR DID HIS BEST TO ARRANGE SOME SORT OF COMPENSATION FOR THE LADY."

BUT INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, EXPLAINED FISHER, ARE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS. AND, ACCORDING TO FISHER, THERE "ARE HUNDREDS OF CASES PENDING IN PANAMA WHERE THE U.S. HAS NOT YET COMPENSATED PEOPLE INJURED BY LIVE AMMUNITION LEFT IN THE FIELD OR ON BEACHES BY THE U.S. ARMY IN MANEUVERS."

ASKED ABOUT FISHER'S CHARGE, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE PANAMA DESK SIAD IT WAS AN ARMY MATTER AND THE ARMY SAID IT WAS "TOO LATE IN THE DAY" OT PROVIDE AN ANSWER.

BUT THAT STILL LEAVES HALLA BROWN UNCOMPENSATED AND PARALYZED.

THUS FAR, INSURANCE HAS COVERED THE BULK OF BROWN'S \$250,000 TO \$300,000 IN MEDICAL BILLS - BILLS FOR THE STAYS AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, BILLS FOR THE YEAR'S STAY AT RUSK INSTITUTE IN NEW YORK CITY WHERE SHE RECEIVED REHABILITATIVE THERAPY, BILLS FOR SUPPLIES NEEDED TO MAINTAIN A WHEELCHAIR AND BEDBOUND PATIENT BILLS OF \$ 26 A DAY FOR ROUND-THE-CLOCK NURSING CARE.

BUT A YEAR FROM NOW THE INSURANCE RUNS OUT. AND DR. ARTHUR ROSENBAUM, BROWN'S HUSBAND, WILL HAVE TO PAY \$60,000 TO \$70,000 A YEAR FOR THE REST OF HIS WIFE'S LIFE.

"I NEVER DREAMT OF RETIRING AT 65" BROWN SAID YESTERDAY AS SHE SAT IN HER WHEELCHAIR HER LEGS PROPPED IN A HORIZONTAL POSITION AS THEY MUST BE TO KEEP BLOOD PRESSURE FROM DROPPING FATALLY LOW.

NOW "I CAN TURN PAGES WITH A MOUTH STICK, THAT'S ABOUT UNCLASSIFIED

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IT", SAID THE WOMAN WHO WAS ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING RESEARCHERS AND AUTHORITIES ON INSECT VENOMS AND THEIR EFFECT ON HUMANS.

PANAMA, SAID ROSENBAUM, HAS A "MORAL OBLIGATION TO ATTEMPT SOME RESTITUTION" FOR THE INJURY DONE HIS WIFE. "I'M CERTAINLY GRATEFUL FOR ANY HELP" HE SAID OF SCHWEIKER'S MOVE, BUT "I DON'T WANT OUR PERSONAL TRAGEDY, HOWEVER, TO BECOME A POLITICAL ISSUE, I CERTAINLY DON'T WANT US TO BECOME A POLITICAL FOOTBALL."

THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED APRIL 20 1974 ABOUT 7:30 A.M. AND NONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS REMEMBER IT. ALL ROSENBAUM AND BROWN KNOW IS THAT THEY WERE HEADING THROUGH THE INTERSECTION OF 34TH AND GARFIELD STREETS NW WHEN THEIR AUTO WAS STRUCK.

ACCORDING TO WITNESSES THEY WERE PLOWED INTO BY A TOYOTA DRIVEN BY ALBERTO WATSON-FABREGA, WHO RAN A RED LIGHT IN PERFECT WEATHER. HE WAS NEVER CHARGED BECAUSE OF DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY, AND WAS ONLY SLIGHTLY INJURED AS WAS ROSENBAUM.

IN ADDITION TO SCHWEIKER'S INTENDED AID CUTOFF, THERE IS LEGISLATION MOVING THROUGH BOTH HOUSE OF CONGRESS TO REQUIRE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE SOME FORM OF COMPENSATION TO AMERICANS INJURED BY PERSONS ACCORDED DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY.

WHAT MIGHT HELP, SAID BROWN, IS SOME SOMR OF FUND WHEREBY ANYBODY WHOSE LIFE IS VIRTUALLY DESTROYED GETS SOME HELP. END. QUOTE.

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5. THE FOLLOWING WAS PREPARED TO BE USED IN THE NOON PRESS BRIEFING OF JULY 1 ON AN IF ASKED BASIS. EXCERPT

THE STORY YOU REFER TO IN THE POST QUOTES MR. ROSENBAUM STATING THAT THEY DO NOT WISH THEIR SITUATION TO BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUE. I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD RESPECT THESE WISHES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE MATTER THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

CHRISTOPHER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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